

# ADDRESS

AT THE

## SEVENTH SESSION

OF THE

# American Horticultural Society

HELD IN CLEVELAND, OHIO.

SEPTEMBER 7, 8, 9, 10, 1886.

By PARKER EARLE,

PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY.

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE SOCIETY  
BY  
LEAVENWORTH & BURR PUBLISHING COMPANY,  
DETROIT, MICH.  
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PUBLISHERS OF  
THE AMERICAN HORTICULTURIST,  
DETROIT, MICH.

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# American Horticultural Society.

OFFICE OF SECRETARY,

GREENCASTLE, Indiana, October 4, 1886.

The following report, made by the Committee appointed to consider the recommendations made by President Earle in his address before the American Horticultural Society at its recent meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, was unanimously adopted, and the address ordered published for *free* distribution. It is hoped that through the dissemination of this able address great encouragement shall be given the cause of American Horticulture, which this Society is laboring to build up.

Requests for copies of this address, accompanied by a *two cent stamp* for postage, should be addressed to the Secretary, as above; also any inquiries regarding membership in the Society, etc.

W. H. RAGAN,

*Secretary American Horticultural Society.*

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PRESIDENT EARLE'S ADDRESS.

There were several points in the President's address which the Committee deem of special importance and worthy of extended notice, and, perhaps, of further discussion by the Society:

The establishment of a Bureau of Pomology in connection with the Department of Agriculture at Washington;

The creation of a commission of pomological experts, to investigate the fruits and culture of foreign countries, especially the interior regions of Europe and Asia, with the view of obtaining valuable products suited to the wants of this country;

The endowment of Experiment Stations in connection with all the Agricultural Colleges of the country;

The Forestry question. To call the attention of our people and their legislators to the overshadowing importance of some practical method by which the conservation of our remaining forests may be attained and their destruction prevented; and also to the need of some uniform system of planting for the future;

The devising of some practical mode for the better and more equal distribution of our fruit crop to all parts of the country.

In addition, the Committee, after due consultation, decided that the importance and value of the many good suggestions contained in the address would render desirable the publication of not less than *two thousand* copies, in pamphlet form, for general distribution, to be sent to the leading horticultural papers of the country, and to such other persons as would be interested and benefitted thereby, thus creating additional interest in this Society and its work. Perhaps no better way could be devised for increasing the membership in the Society and inducing others to join in its good work, than through the dissemination of this address, which so ably sets forth its aims and objects, not only for the welfare of its members, but, as well, for the good of the whole country.

Understanding that the financial condition of the Society would not warrant the undertaking of this work without some additional aid from its members, several of the Committee expressed a willingness to contribute for this worthy object from one to two dollars each, and it was believed that upon a proper presentation of the subject, other members would feel it both a privilege and pleasure to aid the Secretary in carrying out the recommendations of the Committee for this publication. Your Committee would therefore request that all who feel disposed to help in this matter, pay at once, for the use of Secretary Ragan, such sums as their liberality and the importance of the subject may suggest. Mr. Van Deman, having expressed a willingness to receive subscriptions for this purpose, your Committee would recommend that he be appointed a committee of one for this purpose, with such assistants as may be necessary to the successful carrying forward of this work.

GEO. W. CAMPBELL, of Ohio.

PROF. JAMES TROOP, of Indiana.

PROF. H. E. VAN DEMAN, of Kansas.

DR. H. E. MCKAY, of Mississippi.

FRANK H. LEAVENWORTH, of Michigan.

CHAS. A. GREEN, of New York.

J. VAN LINDLEY, of North Carolina.

E. T. HOLLISTER, of Missouri.

W. P. MISLER, of Illinois.

TUISCO GRENIER, of New Jersey.

COMMITTEE.





# PRESIDENT EARLE'S ADDRESS.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY :

It is with much pleasure that I greet you to-day in this seventh meeting of our Society in the enterprising, hospitable and beautiful city of Cleveland. We are glad to meet a second time in the great State of Ohio—a State which is great in all the industrial interests of the time, great in agriculture, and great in horticulture. And we are especially glad to shake hands in this city so happily planted on the shores of an inland sea, with its grand environment of vineyards and orchards and gardens. For wonderful as has been the growth of Cleveland as a manufacturing and commercial city, its horticultural interests have kept even pace, until it has become famous as the centre of a rapidly-expanding garden industry, and celebrated the world over for the almost unrivalled beauty of some of its streets, which illustrate so well the possibilities of horticultural adornment in America. We meet in a town full of enterprise, full of intelligence, full of culture, and full of horticulture.

Our last meeting was held close by the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, in a city abounding in semi-tropical luxuriance and perpetual vernal beauty, in connection with the most extensive and most comprehensive exhibition of horticultural products ever made in the world—an exhibition which we had created—and surrounded by all the vast appliances of that greatest of industrial exhibitions—the World's Exposition in New Orleans. From the protracted labors—for so many of us—connected with that exhibition we have taken a long respite, and can now calmly review that work of many months, and estimate its value. And now as I look back upon that exhibition across a distance of eighteen months, with its fifty thousand plates of fruit gathered from over fifty States and nations, from all the climates of the world and all the seasons of the year; with its ten thousand transplanted forest, fruit and ornamental trees representing eight hundred species; with its strange flora from tropic wildernesses and sterile deserts mingling with the cultivated plants of Europe, Asia and America, I re-assert my belief that you who shared in this great labor, and all horticulturists who witnessed its results, will join in the opinion that the work which this Society did in organizing the International Exhibition of Horticulture at New Orleans constituted the most notable horticultural event of modern times.

This Society was first organized to meet the wants of the fruit-growers, gardeners, forest growers and lovers of rural art in the States of the Mississippi Valley. But horticulturists from most of the States of the East and of the West soon came to us for membership, and they asked us to extend our territorial limits to embrace all of the horticultural interests of the continent, from ocean to ocean. After much deliberation this was done at our large meeting in New Orleans, so that we are now in name, as we had been for years before in membership and in the spirit of our work, an American Society.

At one of our earlier meetings a good friend and eminent worker for horticulture asked in a somewhat critical spirit "what excuse the Mississippi Valley Horticultural Society had to give for its existence." I believe, gentlemen, that the excuse has been rendered, informally, but sufficient



in itself to answer our friend. It is quite possible that this same earnest and excellent questioner, or some other one, has asked, or may ask us again, what reason we have for being a National, or rather an American Society of horticulture. Let us hope that the future work of the Society will fully justify its being here, with its great name, bearing the flags of two Nations in its hands.

The need for, and the possible usefulness of large, far reaching societies is very apparent. The reason is of the same kind, but larger, as the reason for the existence of any societies at all. Societies bring people together for the comparison of views, and the enlargement of views. The local society gathers and formulates the experience and wisdom of the community. The county and district associations have their larger important work. The State societies stimulate and organize and give direction and tone to the civilizing work of horticulture in whole commonwealths, and great States feel and exhibit the ennobling results of society action. There is scarcely a State in our Union whose whole industrial development, whose entire civilization to-day does not show the deep imprint of organized horticultural activity. It is seen in bending orchards, in burdened vineyards, and in fruitful gardens. It hangs banners in every park of town or city, and sings pæans in groves and forests planted by man or saved from the woodman's axe. It babbles in fountains built and in brooks preserved, and its beauty shines on ten thousand green and shaded lawns, and in every window where flowers bloom and vines clamber. If you could take out the influences of horticulture from the structure of our civilization, you would have left a system of bare walls, hard forms, and coarse living, in whose presence we should be strangers as in an unknown world.

But should the beneficent results of horticultural organization stop with State lines? As long as our interests and our needs reach out in all directions through the land; as long as our lines of commercial interchange, for the products of horticulture, as well as for the yields of the loom, the fruits of the forge, and the creations of the brain run in all ways across the continent, from the sea to the sea, and from the tropics to the frozen zone, will societies which bring us into larger acquaintanceships, which inform us of larger conditions, which stimulate us with new inventions, which tempt us with new successes, and which in every way enlarge the horizon of our intelligence, be found useful and more indispensable to the horticulturist, as to the man engaged in any great work.

We are constantly dealing with new factors in horticulture. We have new avenues of exchange; we have new plants, new flowers, new fruits; we have new diseases, new insect enemies, new surprises of climate; we find new adaptations for old things, and our old plans broadening out into a hundred new channels. All these ever-varying and ever-enlarging conditions of our old institution of horticulture, challenge us all who would be live men in managing horticulture as a business, or its successful apostles as a refining social power, to adopt every agency for the enlargement of our knowledge of the facts surrounding us, and of the wider relations to which our interests extend. There is perhaps within our reach no single agency which does so much to quicken investigation, to bring into public view the results of individual research, and so to enlarge the realm of our knowledge, as the organized societies of the time. This is true in every field of moral, social, or scientific work. It is no less true in the domain of horticulture. Horticultural societies have made horticulturists, and have made horticultural literature.

Horticulture in the larger definitions which men give the term, covers a wide field. It has outgrown the restricted definition which confined it to the cultivation of a garden. For as Lord Bacon has defined gardening to be "the art which doth mend nature," the modern horticulturist has taken for his task all of the sciences and arts which relate to the garden, the orchard, the vineyard, and to the forest which stands behind and protects all these. The word relates to all that embellishes the home, the farm, the public highway or public park; and to all that affects the great industries springing from vineyard, garden and orchard. There are great, noble, and most useful



societies of the broadest scope devoted to each of the specialties which together make up the system of horticulture. These societies embrace many of the most noted and most noble workers of our time. But as all of these special interests interlace and overlap each other there should be some ground common to all of them, where all may mingle and in many ways do each other good. That common ground is the horticultural society whose sympathies reach out and embrace them all.

Stated in a general way horticulture has its æsthetic side and its economic side. Which has been developing the most rapidly in the last quarter of a century it would be hard to say. But both of these branches have had an unfolding in this country that is quite unparalleled, and would seem marvelous if we did not live in the necromantic age of steam and electricity. We older people remember how bare and lean were the surroundings of ninety-five per cent. of American rural homes thirty or forty years ago; how their unshaded and weather-beaten sides met all the assaults of the sun and the shock of storms without the intervention of screen or tree, and how if there was a bed of flowers about it was bashfully hidden in some corner as if afraid of getting in someone's way—save only the unblushing hollyhocks which in solid phalanx near the front door sometimes defied all rebuke!

If you travel over New England, or the middle States, or the broad plains of the West to-day, and count the thousands of mansions, villas, and cottages, in suburbs, in towns and on farms, which are embowered in shade and sheltered from winds, with bright lawns and blooming flower beds around them; if you will consider the sheltering roadside maples, the shaded school-house grounds, the hundreds of handsome parks; and how everywhere the love of beauty in the soul of man and woman is in full blossom in tree and plant, in lawn and architecture, you will be certain that the æsthetic side of our horticultural education has been advancing at a wonderful rate. And this is the side of it that is undoubtedly of the most importance to the interests of the people; for far more is it essential that the love and longing for beauty in the hearts of men be stimulated and gratified, than that we should have great variety on our tables, or profits from orchard or garden in our pockets.

On the æsthetic side, horticulture allies itself with all the good influences which elevate the race. It co-operates with education, with art, with moral culture, with religion in expanding whatever is pure and best in human nature. On its economic side it is growing into some of the large industries of the time. Consider what a business the culture of flowers has become within a generation. The commerce in cut-flowers alone amounts to millions of dollars annually in some of our great cities. And flower culture as a business is growing rapidly in all of our American cities. Large capital is invested in it, and tens of thousands of persons earn their daily bread in producing and vending products which minister chiefly to the sense of beauty.

A history of the nursery business in this country would be full of surprises. Think of the days when that quaint missionary of horticulture and religion, "Johnny Apple Seed," wandered through the wilderness of Ohio, scattering benedictions from his generous pockets. He was a veritable prophet of the great nurseries and orchards of to-day. He is perhaps the most romantic figure in horticultural history. We only know him under the odd soubriquet which the rustic speech of that day gave him—but that name should be mentioned with reverence among the benefactors of the West. And the horticultural State of Ohio, whose orchard products have been estimated at ten millions of dollars of annual value, would do herself honor by somewhere building a suitable monument to the memory of one who, while he was scattering fragments of religious books among the pioneers of a new land, planted apple seeds in every favoring spot.

A half century since, how few and small were the American nurseries, while now the great nurseries are numbered almost by the hundred, and the small ones no man has counted. And each one is fostering the infant stages of landscape and floral beauty, and the germs of golden



orchard harvests in the future, or of forests that shall shelter and protect a needy land. The business of the nurseryman has become one of great magnitude and commercial importance, and upon its continued growth and prosperity depends much of the happiness, the civilization, and the future glory of the American States. All honor and profit to the energetic men who have built up this noble business, and who are making this happy country of ours the most fruitful and the most flowerful of any land under the sun.

Perhaps no industrial expansion of the time shows more remarkable results than the business of American fruit culture. A single generation has witnessed a revolution in the habits of living of the American people. The rare luxuries of thirty years ago have become the every day necessities of American tables, and the health-giving and refining influences of general and abundant fruit supplies are working their noticeable effect upon the physique and character of the nation.

Thirty years ago the daily receipts of strawberries in the city of Chicago—now the second greatest fruit market in the world—could all have been carried in one wagon at one load, and it would not have been a large load either. Now whole railway trains are engaged to carry the daily supply of that market, which often amounts to three hundred tons, and sometimes to twice that quantity. A similar increase of supply has taken place in most of the markets of the country. The production of the Wilson strawberry was the beginning of a new era in strawberry culture, and I may add, of small fruit gardening; for all branches of the business have been stimulated and carried along by the tide of enthusiasm which has planted strawberry fields all over the continent, and covered the tables of the rich and of the poor alike, with their dishes of fragrance and crimson beauty. Thirty or forty years ago it would be safe to say that all the strawberries marketed in one day in the United States could have been gathered by a force no larger than I have seen bending over the smiling rows of a single plantation. Now there are probably not less than a quarter of a million harvesters engaged in gathering this delightful fruit for market growers. Then the season of this fruit was limited to the three or four weeks of its ripening in each locality; now by the help of railways and refrigerator transportation it extends over four or five months of the spring and summer; and strawberries are sometimes transported a distance equal to that from the Atlantic to the Pacific seas.

Thirty years ago, the supply of peaches for that same wonderful fruit market of Chicago nearly all came from one orchard, and that not a large one. That orchard has long since died, and its successors have grown and borne and died; but it now takes contributions from all the orchards of the South and West, and on the shores of the great lakes; from the fruitful Delaware peninsula, and from the distant valleys of California, to supply the Chicago market and its dependencies with this one most delicious fruit of summer.

How much more than a generation since was it that the principal vineyards of this country clung along a few miles of bluff on the Ohio river? There was then no good grape which the people generally could grow. But a great want brought its remedy, as it often does. The occasion brought the man. The man lived in classic Concord, where so many good and wise men have lived. For there, a sagacious, patient experimenter produced from the native wildings of Massachusetts that most valuable grape for the millions, the magnificent Concord. May perennial honors crown the good, grey head of the producer of the Concord grape, and of all such unselfish benefactors of the race. For millions of people now eat grapes grown on their own vines that could not have done so but for such a labor. With the introduction of the Concord a new era in grape growing was begun. Concord vines were planted in the East and in the West; in the extreme South and in the extreme North. Farmers and villagers, and the crowded denizens of cities planted grape vines; they not only planted the vines, but they gathered the shining clusters of fruit, in town and country, on hillside and plain, all over this broad land. Stimulated by this great success a hundred others have produced good grapes of every complexion, variety and qual-



ity under the sun ; and there is no locality so bleak or so barren but can select one or more varieties of American grapes which will flourish under its peculiar conditions. So good grapes can, with a little simple care, be everywhere grown, in all the States and territories and provinces of the continent, and by every person who owns a rod of land—good, ripe, sweet, beautiful grapes that shall gladden every home.

And so, by the persistence and devotion of horticulturists this great land has become full of fruits. They are everywhere, at all seasons, and within the reach of all. Few tables need go without them and few mouths hunger long for them, for they have become cheaper than bread and meat in most of our markets.

And yet it takes toil and skill, and the patient attack of many difficulties to produce good fruits, and to make them abundant. It seems to have been determined by Providence that the conquests of man over nature may become very complete, but that the varied labor of these conquests shall develop and educate every faculty of the man himself. We cannot reap the golden harvest of orchard and vineyard without we have been found worthy in the patient labor and skill with which we have met and overcome the endless difficulties which hedge them round. For successful horticulture illustrates anew the old "irrepressible conflict" between good and evil. Very luckily for the general good, the pursuit of our art carries with it a certain fascination for its devotees—it generates an enthusiasm which pushes its followers along over every frowning difficulty, until the amount of our accomplishment is sometimes greater than we desire, or than is profitable to ourselves. Many as are the enemies to conquer in every line of horticultural effort—and sometimes it seems as if all the forces of nature were combining against our success, when insects deface and blights wither and drouths burn and frosts destroy—yet the ingenuity, the energy, the enthusiasm of the horticultural producer are found sufficient in most cases to overcome all obstacles so far as to provide enough, and too much. In fact the difficulties of production have been so far overcome that most branches of the business *seem* to be suffering from *over*-production.

Looking at this question from the standpoint of a commercial grower of fruits, it appears to me that one of the chief problems for our fraternity to solve is how to distribute our products more perfectly—how to reach wider markets. This involves superior methods of handling and packing, and superior means of transportation. There is, as yet, no absolute over-production of good fruits ; but there is defective distribution. There were not too many apples grown in New York and Michigan and Missouri last year, although apples sold in many of our large markets for prices far below the possibilities of profit ; but our system of distribution left half of the families in America with few or no apples to eat all of last winter. When one or more barrels of apples go into each farm house and laborer's cottage all over the South, to each miner's cabin among the mountains, and to all the new homes building on the wide plains of the West, the supply of apples will not be found too large. There have not been too many oranges grown in Florida and California for the last few years, though many orange growers have got little profit from their crops ; for three quarters of the people within a practicable commercial distance of these orange orchards have eaten almost no oranges in these years. If all the American people were to eat apples and oranges daily in their season, the quantity produced would not supply their wants. A more thorough system of distribution with the improved transportation facilities now at command will render this approximately possible. There is no fruit produced in our country so tender or perishable but that it can be carried and marketed half way, if not all the way across the continent, when the best facilities are used ; while our most important fruits can successfully be placed in the great markets of Europe.

Hence it appears to me that we are not producing too much, but are marketing too poorly, and that the question of the distribution of our horticultural products is the one most important to

the commercial grower. Its successful solution will result in infinite benefits to the people who consume, and in living profits to the often-discouraged class who produce. This problem, together with those relating to the difficulties of production, will keep every fruit-grower wide awake and on the alert, who attempts with some spirit to master the business which he has adopted. There is no obstacle in the way which energy—intelligent energy—cannot overcome, and I confidently expect to see the schemes of distribution, preservation, and marketing now in progress so far perfected that every worthy fruit-grower will be constantly challenged by the profits within his reach to do better work and to master the difficulties of his situation.

It is with much pleasure that I recognize the improved relations between the horticultural fraternity and that department of the general Government which touches our immediate interests. It was with peculiar satisfaction that I saw the present administration call to its aid, in the Department of Agriculture, a leading member and founder of our own Society—a gentleman of such eminent ability and knowledge in all lines of agriculture and horticulture, and one possessed of such enthusiasm for all good work—as is our distinguished friend, the Commissioner of Agriculture. Governor Colman's work in the department demonstrates, what we all believe of him, his eminent fitness for the office. And what he has done shows that he does not forget any of the interests of horticulture. He is originating new methods of helping our cause, and he asks his old friends for such suggestions as he can make useful. It seems to me a fortunate time for us to ask the aid of the Government for certain important matters which cannot be accomplished without its powerful assistance. Now, while we have a "friend at court," of whose sympathy and influence we are sure, it is a favorable occasion for us to consider these questions.

A good beginning has been made in the creation of a Division of Pomology by an act of the last Congress, but no sufficient provision was made for its establishment upon a comprehensive working basis. It is evident that the extent of the useful work which such a bureau could do was never considered by Congress, as but little can be accomplished with the small sum appropriated. In a country whose annual production of fruits exceeds a hundred million dollars of value, the helpful work which such a bureau could do would abundantly justify a liberal expenditure for its maintenance. For instance, the establishment of a system of fruit crop reports, covering our whole territory, to be tabulated and sent out monthly, or oftener, would have exceeding value for all fruit-growers, and for all who are commercially interested in our pomological harvests. We have long needed such a system of reporting. It is almost indispensable to any intelligent handling of the crops we grow. But such a system cannot be established outside of a Government bureau. This is but one of many useful services which a pomological bureau could render, if it was well endowed and well directed.

The establishment of Experiment Stations in connection with, or under the direction of our agricultural colleges, is another work, important alike to every interest of both agriculture and horticulture, which the Government should not longer delay the commencement of. An excellent bill covering these wants was before Congress last year, which I think had the general endorsement of our agricultural colleges and societies. What can we do to help this measure along?

We need a more thorough research than has yet been possible into the conditions surrounding successful fruit culture in Russia, China, and other inter-continental countries, whose severe climates correspond to our own interior climates, which, as we know, prove disastrous to nearly all varieties of fruit originating in countries under the influence of the sea. The fruits of Central Russia have endured the test of centuries of winters and summers, worse perhaps, than our country can parallel, and they are grown in great quantities in a latitude six hundred miles farther north than that of Quebec. And there almost under the Arctic Circle, has been building up through hundreds of bitter winters and arid summers a race of fruits, from which all weakness has been bred out, the fittest qualities only surviving. If these varieties are not all, or many of them,



as good in quality as our modern tastes demand, they at least will furnish the foundation for new and hardier races of fruits that will withstand the trying climatic vicissitudes covering half of this continent, under which our older varieties cannot be successfully grown. Is there any pomological question more important than this? We want to know more about Russian and Asiatic fruit culture. We want to know all about it that years of investigation, by a competent commission, can secure. This is certainly a work for the Government to undertake. The work has been nobly begun by the enterprise of two honored pomologists, whose labors can not be too highly commended; for Mr. Gibb and Prof. Budd have already given the country a service which entitles them to great honors. The Government should take up and complete their work.

But the most important subject to which we can call the attention of the Government is the work of forestry. This is the one grand question that overtops all other questions of public economy to-day. The rapid destruction of the vast forest areas of this continent has unbalanced the forces of nature. Our seasons have changed their temperate courses. Destructive floods are followed by consuming drouths. Our crops become more uncertain. Our climate becomes full of extremes. The situation is one that challenges the attention of every thoughtful man, and that every year of timber waste makes worse. The forests of Europe, so far as saved at all, have been largely preserved and built up by the strong arm of the Government. And we must look to the State Governments and to the National Government for the saving and the upbuilding of our forest interests. What woodlands we have should be preserved by absolute force where the Government has the right, and by all encouraging legislation where it has no control. And by every possible measure, State and National, should forest planting be encouraged. There are very few if any of the states but what have passed the limit of safety in the work of deforestation. I cannot here argue this question at length, but a single fact will illustrate the imminent necessity for action. This State of Ohio where we meet to-day, in 1853 had 54 per cent. of its surface covered with forest. In 1884, but 17 per cent. of the area remained in timber. Thus in a single generation two-thirds of all the forest in existence at the beginning of the period had been destroyed, and but one-sixth of the surface of the State is now protected by the garments with which God covered these hills and plains.

Do you wonder that the valley of the Ohio is almost annually desolated by inundation? That climates change, and always for the worse? That winters are harder, and summers hotter, and drouths more destructive? Do you wonder that there are no more sparkling brooks that run and sing all summer, but only muddy torrents, and the dried up beds of streams? The great conservative equalizing power of the forest is gone. The State of Ohio would seem to be making hasty strides towards the agricultural condition of Arabia. And Ohio stands for America. I quail before the inexorable penalties which nature has in store for all states and peoples who will ruthlessly destroy so glorious a heritage of forest as the American people once possessed. Without forests no successful agriculture is possible, and no high civilization can be maintained. It surely becomes the duty of every intelligent citizen to use all available influences through state and national legislation, and by the diffusion of light among the people, to save what remains of our American woodlands, and to grow new forests over the vast treeless plains where they are both an economic necessity, and an indispensable factor of a profitable agriculture.







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